

Memorial held today for noted artist

Martin's works
were featured
in Acadiana.

Beverly Corbell
bcorbell@theadvertiser.com

LAFAYETTE — Noted artist Eugene James Martin, who died at his home Jan. 1, will be eulogized at a memorial service at 10 a.m. today at Martin & Castille Funeral Home.

Martin, 66, a native of Washington, D.C., was a transplant to Lafayette, said Rob Robison, owner of Jefferson Street Market, which displayed Martin's works in a show this fall in its Galerie Lafayette.

Martin's widow, Suzanne Fredericq, is an associate professor of biology at the University of Louisiana. They married in 1988 and moved to Lafayette in 1996.

"He was amazingly prolific," Robison said. "He painted all the time and was generally recognized in the art world as being a significant artist."

According to a Web site

See **MARTIN** on Page 2B

Continued from Page 1B

Martin

devoted to Martin, his works are displayed in several museums and are in private collections all over the world, including the collection of Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations. Several of his works are also on display at the new Acadiana Arts Center.

Although he was an accomplished poet as well as an artist, Martin's early years were difficult, according to an interview in 1985 with Dean Howard King of the University of North Carolina.

"My mother deceased when I was about five, and I was put in foster homes," Martin told King. "I ran away from the first one. And when I ran away, I ran to the Capitol. Sat on the steps. So that was unique, I think. I was this little black kid and all these white steps, and I was just sitting there. I was very peaceful. Then the guards came and took me into an office. I was sent back to the foster home. Then I ran away again."

After a series of foster homes, Martin lived on a farm until he was 20, joined the U.S. Navy and then enrolled in the Corcoran School of Art in Washington D.C., which he attended from 1960 to 1963.

A self-described mystic, Martin described his work in the interview as "satirical abstracts."

"Because first they're humorous," he explained to King. "They're imagery. The imagery is, I find, very warm, very positive, very amusing. They're humble and shy. They're not pompous."